



United States Department of the Interior

MINERALS MANAGEMENT SERVICE

DISTRICT MINING OFFICE

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ALBUQUERQUE, NEW MEXICO 87102

FILE

June 28, 1982

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PUEBLO OF LAGUNA
GOVERNOR'S OFFICE

Mr. Harry D. Early
Governor
Pueblo of Laguna
P. O. Box 194
Laguna, New Mexico 87026

Confidential Claim Retracted

Authorized by: SC

Date: 6/12/83

Dear Governor Early:

June 22, we discussed the possibility of an inspection of the open underground mine workings (NJ-45, P-10 and P-13 Mines) at the Jackpile-Paguate Mine by representatives of the Pueblo of Laguna. As I noted, the extent of such an inspection could be restricted by hazardous conditions in the mine workings, primarily those due to unstable ground and high radiation levels (radon gas).

June 24, I met with Mr. Tom Castor, Supervisory Mining Inspector with the Mine Safety and Health Administration (MSHA) in Albuquerque, to discuss alternative procedures for an underground inspection. According to Mr. Castor, ideal conditions for the inspection would require reestablishment of the mines' ventilation systems to assure safe radiation levels. I explained that with current conditions at the mines, this could involve a low to moderate expense for the NJ-45 and P-13 Mines and an excessive expense for the P-10 Mine depending on the extent of the inspection. I also explained that cost is an important consideration in the inspection effort because the inspection is only for observation and not mapping, sampling, etc.

I suggested the use of self-contained breathing apparatus to protect participants from high radon gas concentrations during the inspection. Mr. Castor does not favor this procedure because the use of this equipment is uncomfortable and limited and requires trained personnel. Furthermore, the availability of this type of equipment could also be limited.

Mr. Castor suggested the use of respirators with sampling of the mines' atmospheres to assure that the respirators provide participants with adequate protection against radon gas. Mr. Castor also volunteered to provide the necessary sampling equipment and trained personnel to assist with this procedure. Mr. Castor also pointed out that personnel with experience in underground mining should be included in the inspection to watch for unstable ground and other possible hazards.

At this time, I do not believe that reestablishment of the mines' ventilation systems or the use of self-contained breathing apparatus are feasible. However, if you wish, I will contact Anaconda Minerals Company about the details



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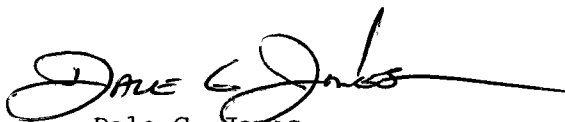
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of these procedures such as cost estimates, availability of equipment, etc. Due to the limited purpose of the inspection, I believe that the use of respirators with sampling of the radon gas levels is the most practical inspection procedure. I recommend that MSHA's assistance be accepted, and I would be happy to coordinate the inspection with the Pueblo's representatives, Anaconda and MSHA. I would also be very interested in attending the inspection myself.

I also questioned Mr. Castor about responsibility for the safety of the inspection participants. According to Mr. Castor, the participants or their employers would be responsible in the NJ-45 and P-13 Mines because Anaconda has formally notified MSHA that these mines are no longer in operation. There is a question about responsibility in the P-10 Mine because Anaconda has not formally notified MSHA about its closure. I will pursue this matter with Anaconda. Mr. Castor pointed out that MSHA would require that all inspection participants be equipped with proper safety equipment (hats, boots, self-rescuers, etc.) and briefly trained in the use of this equipment and recognition of possible hazards.

As I said, I would be happy to arrange the inspection at your request. If you have any questions, please contact me.

Sincerely yours,



Dale C. Jones
District Mining Supervisor

Xerox copy to Rox J. Salomon 7/26/82 ejm